

Alumni Advisory Board

Summer - General Meeting Minutes

Saturday, August 9, 2025

- I. Welcome – Amanda Stapleton
- II. Roll Call – Holly Kowalski
 - a. AAB – Corie Biggs, Mike Chaney, Richard Franko, Garrett Hart, Derek Hawn, Nellie Hohne, Melva Holt, Josh Hulett, Paige Hynson, Neil Irwin, Ode Keil, Joni Lipkowitz, Chris Lippelt, Ken McCleary, Alexa Myers, Ashley Pinkham, Craig Pohlman, Austin Salisbury, Casey Schroepfel, Dieter Shultz, Jeffery Smiley, Amanda Stapleton, Nick Wahl, Floyd Yager; Absent: Steve Decker
 - b. ARBOT: Nellie Hohne, Marie Stettler Kleine, Dan Price
- III. Review Agenda and Approval of Minutes – Amanda Stapleton
 - a. Motion to approve minutes, Ken McCleary; seconded by Nellie Hohne, motion carried.
- IV. Passing of the Gavel – Charlie Ricker
 - a. Since Nellie missed the spring meeting, the official passing of the gavel from Nellie to Amanda Stapleton took place.
- V. Welcome New Members – Amanda Stapleton
 - a. Amanda welcomed new members to the board and gave them an opportunity to introduce themselves: Corie Biggs, Richard Franko, Garrett Hart, Josh Hulett, Paige Hynson, Ode Keil, and Chris Lippelt.
- VI. ARBOT Report – Marie Stettler Kleine
 - a. For new members, there are three representatives to the Board of Trustees (Marie Stettler Kleine, Dan Price and Nellie Hohne). One of the highlights and bittersweet moments was saying goodbye to Chris Inman, who served as an ARBOT member. His work with current students has been unparalleled.
 - b. ARBOT report is located on pages 16-20 of the board book. The spring meeting is a wonderful time of celebration and honoring graduating students.
 - c. President Coons discussed some internal and external pressures leading to the major concern of the size of the incoming class.
 - i. The volatility of federal and state executive orders and uncertainty in economy.
 - ii. AI and impact on Computer Science job market
 - iii. Larger trends in thinking about the value of higher education
 - iv. Existing financial model can be challenging with enrollment volatility
 - v. Workload shifts for staff and faculty, students with more needs and the individual attention and support that is Rose's core mission
 - vi. Political and economic volatility is impacting enrollment, placement, and employee satisfaction
 - d. There are some happy things to report – rankings, awards and accolades continue to affirm the reputation of Rose-Hulman. Institutional Advancement had one of the best philanthropic years in Rose's history. Rose continues to improve

facilities and infrastructure on campus and also continues to attract talented staff and faculty.

- e. Starting on page 16 of the board book is a list of Endowed Faculty Chairs that were confirmed along with some retirements that took place. There are also stats about the spring day of service and the new residence hall.
- f. The board and cabinet are really attuned to the strategic vision of the institution. The advancing by design strategic plan is one year underway with achievements in each of the four areas.
- g. Commencement was a great celebration with 447 students receiving undergraduate degrees, 67 receiving graduate degrees and 62 will complete their degrees in the summer and fall.
- h. Several personnel changes in Academic Affairs including the addition of Dr. Ellen Goldey, the new Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Dr. Goldey replaces Rick Stamper. There were also four ongoing faculty searches in May but those have been paused.
- i. Importantly, the Software Engineering/Computer Science Department removed the Software Engineering major and introduced two CS tracks, developer and researcher. This has been a discussion at the last several board meetings, mostly to clarify communication with incoming students and employers. This will match comparable institutions.
- j. The CCC project is being facilitated and coordinated by Rick Stamper, Associate Vice President of Strategic Initiatives. This is located at the intersection of 42 and 46. There are three initiatives with this project 1) Innovation Grove; 2) large solar farm; 3) pedestrian trail through campus connecting Heritage Trail with the trail that ends at Dobbs Park. Innovation Grove is under construction now and that will house Ventures. This will be connected to a second building (Union Health Bone and Joint) and will give students at Ventures the ability to walk across the bridge and see into a surgical theatre and see how devices are being used in real time. This also allows surgeons to walk over to Ventures to ask for assistance with coming up with new ideas/devices for students to work on. The joint replacement center will be trailing the Innovation Grove construction 6-9 months.
- k. From pages 18-19 in the board book, this is the somber news and great concern to the board. The enrollment management report was presented to us prior to the board meeting so that we could hear from Tom Bear during the meeting. Overall, enrollment numbers compared to 2024 are down. As of early May, there were 511 deposits compared to 582 last year, and with numbers this size, that is significant. This year's class is predicted to come in at 500-505. Application numbers have decreased due to strategic outreach strategy from a record number of 6295 last year to 6133 this year. The admission rate increased from 73% to 79%. That strategic decision last year that brought in those record-breaking numbers, Rose was advertising in a pool that may not have been as STEM focused as we wanted to target. Rose accepted a record number of 4837 students; the matriculation rate is 1.9% lower than last year. Rose saw significant enrollment decreases in chemical engineering, computer engineering, computer science, engineering design and software engineering, and this is seen nationwide. Female enrollment decreased by 58 students or 37%. Male enrollment decreased by 13 students or 3%. Noblitt Scholars has been a

successful program at drawing in high achieving students. The program accepted 18 students into the program, which is also down. Since the meeting in May, the Cabinet and President Coons hired an external consultant to look into what is driving these issues. The consultant had these four summative points:

- i. Significantly increased competition from flagship public and selective private institutions (these institutions can offer better packages)
- ii. Financial uncertainty and political rhetoric during the decision season
- iii. A nationwide dip in international students
- iv. A drop in interest in computer science due to the perceived volatility in that job market

Again, Rose is a tuition driven institution and our budget is down approximately \$2.5 million for this upcoming year so the cabinet needs to respond to that decrease. They are responding in four ways: 1) freezing majority of remaining open positions; 2) reducing departmental operating budgets; 3) delaying or deferring select capital purchases and 4) reducing travel and professional development for faculty and staff. Rose is also offering an early retirement program. Some questions and discussion followed.

Finally, 86% of the graduating class had solidified post-graduation plans and 12 offers were rescinded due to federal hiring freezes and impending trade traffic. There were a number of updates from Erik Hayes, Vice President and Dean of Students listed on page 20 of the board book. There are counseling center updates along with an exciting addition of a new Student Accessibility Director. A brief report from the SGA President and as stated earlier, Institutional Advancement had a record-breaking fundraising year.

VII. Institutional Advancement – Steve Brady

- a. The new residence hall will be going online as freshman move in during the next few weeks. Everything looks really nice. Each floor has a community space with a kitchen a large tv and every floor is to have some type of gaming table, such as foosball. There is also a space at the opposite end of the floor that is enclosed but is a space for students to go to study. There are individual restrooms and showers for students, so it is not suite style living. Student Affairs was instrumental in how the building was designed. The set up was intentional. The space is extremely flexible, in that, a floor can be flipped from male to female overnight or made coed.
- b. Institutional Advancement did have a great fiscal year '25 that ended in June. When you start with a \$30 million dollar gift, there's nowhere to go but up. There was also a \$10 million Noblitt Entrepreneurship gift and \$9 million dollar gift that went towards the new residence hall and student competition teams and a \$2 million dollar gift that went to scholarships. That was during a time when Institutional Advancement was down gift officers. Since then, there have been four gift officers hired, and they are all remote. Our Director of Major Gifts, Ryan Little, is located in Colorado and the other three are located in Louisiana, Utah and Indianapolis. Advancement Services also hired a new Stewardship Coordinator.

- c. Ayanna Tweedy, our Athletic Director, left to find a new position and Seth Woodason, who was managing the SRC, is now the acting Interim Athletic Director.

VIII. Alumni Relations – Charlie Ricker

- a. Carmen Dean was introduced as our new Coordinator, and she started in June. Her responsibilities will be focused on Homecoming and Alumni Awards, and she will be taking direction from Carrie Bose, our Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Special Events. They will also be helping Jeffery with the Alumni Engagement initiative.
- b. Alumni Relations maintained our one event per month schedule that was lined out. This year AR was able to get events strategically lined up in the summer when there is usually a lull. Homecoming is coming up and registration is live. Be sure to register if you are attending any events this year and be sure to make hotel reservations if necessary. Homecoming is October 3-5 this year.
- c. Carrie, Carmen and I are working with the gift officers to set up a schedule of events for the remainder of 2025 and into 2026. Hopefully by the middle of December there will be a list of events for 2026. Events can also be added later in addition to that slate of initial dates.
- d. The new Lego kit is out and is available at the bookstore and online. It is Moench Hall, and it is a larger kit than the last two. Four buildings have been completed, and we need to think about campus and what else we would like to do in the future.
- e. Alumni Relations welcomes any feedback on how alumni would like to be engaged in your city with the new Alumni Engagement initiative. It is important in how we decide what type of events to plan. It could be something new and different, and we are always willing to try a new event. It is important for us to hear your voice in alumni engagement.

IX. Career Services – Jared Goulding

- a. Our office wanted to share with this group that there is a changing landscape as it pertains to recruitment of talent at college campuses and it is beginning to affect Rose-Hulman. During a conference in June, and meeting with the Talent Acquisition from General Motors, that led to a phone call where the hopes were to talk about options for General Motors to be able to recruit on this campus. Before the conversation got started, she told me that they really have their model in place. They know where they are going, and they are not going to step outside of that model. Certain campuses are considered Tier 1, and they would not be stepping outside of that Tier. There are a lot of these institutions that we are dealing with.
- b. The investment of staff and finances requires that you maximize the effect you can have, and the hiring needs are not solely within engineering. It is going to be in administration, marketing and business, there are going to be multiple areas of recruitment. As a recruiter, you want a one-stop shop. A recruiter is going to set up their tent, do that seven times, get applicants from all across divisions and then it is done. What this is doing is creating a step-away from Rose-Hulman as an institution that they are recruiting from. Some examples of where we are starting to see this GM, Cleveland Cliffs, Collins Aerospace, Procter and Gamble, Cummins Diesel, Caterpillar, Edgile, PepsiCo/Frito Lay, and even General Mills.

- c. Some of the responses that we have been implementing as an office begin with the network that we are trying to be connected to. Handshake is the platform that we use to connect with companies. Their model has changed as to how those connections are created. It used to be a social media model, where a company would reach out, request from the Career Services office to be connected and then we would approve it. If there was alignment in the hiring that they would be doing in STEM needs then they could start posting job opportunities and registering for events; that was how it used to work. Now it is purely job postings that are approved and if approved for a new employer, then they are added to our network. It went from a 40% approval rate for company requests that we would receive to now less than a 5% approval rate. The amount of new connections has dropped considerably. Handshake has also moved to serve more of the large institutions with comprehensive academic offerings to where they are doing auto approvals of their jobs, as opposed to a more focused institution like Rose-Hulman. One of our responses was to flip the script. This summer we identified companies within different industries, and we are going to approve companies in Handshake to increase our network. To create connections, you add specific staff members as a contact so that we have someone to reach out to. We have added over 5,000 companies this summer, about a 50% increase over where we were at the beginning of the summer. It went from 9,000 to about 14,000.
- d. Another response is we are going to be taking over the alumni newsletter this August. There will be some messaging, education and requests of the alumni that we want to make to help respond to what it is that we are seeing in the landscape. We want to serve the general alumni but also get across this understanding that if alumni are not going to promote Rose-Hulman as a source of talent at your company, then no one is.
- e. Another response is a simple handbook for alumni as to how you can get involved and here is how you can promote and create some recruitment engagement on this campus. What we are asking of the alumni board is to be those champions at your company. Every top employer on this campus has an active alumni engagement group or individual that is leading it. Examples would be Eli Lilly, Milwaukee Tool, NAVSEA/Crane, Marathon Petroleum, Kuerig/Dr. Pepper and we are appreciative to these alumni who have led out and made sure that Rose-Hulman is incorporated into their plan.
- f. In that conversation with GM, when they said they would only be going to Tier 1 schools, they then added a little caveat of, however, if we hear from a group of alumni and they would like to go to Rose-Hulman, we have an as-yet announced program in place that would give them support to do so. Part of the ask is helping to build awareness and educate – that this question needs to be asked by alumni. What are the programs in place? If centralized TA is not going to Rose-Hulman, we have a chance to do so. Build that cohort of alumni that might be in the organization, message it together and allow them to see that there is momentum and thought behind it and allow us to connect with them, to share, if need be, what are the different avenues available. Career Fairs, obviously, but there are many different ways to get some recruitment opportunities going on campus.

- g. The reality is there are currently 171 companies registered for the Fall Career Fair. We are excited about that number, and it is progressing nicely and the hope is to hit that 250 mark for the Fall Career Fair in a couple of months on October 1. Another thing we are going to do, but it has not been announced yet, is that for the first time companies that are not going to pivot in a single summer, we are going to be adding a virtual career fair where it is open for them to have a gateway experience and to have meaningful conversations with our students in early December. The remaining Career Fairs and other events will still be available in our slate of options.
 - h. Please be a champion and help us promote this across all alumni nationwide to help build a willingness and understanding that this is now the reality that we are dealing with.
 - i. A period of questions and answers followed.
- X. New Business
- a. Constitution and Bylaws Updates– Amanda Stapleton
 - i. The Exec team met and there are two areas within the Constitution that we are going to be suggesting need change and will go for an official vote during the next meeting because we have to provide 30 days' notice before we can vote on those.
 1. Article IV Section 3 – the first sentence {The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Past President, President, Vice President and four at-large members, which are appointed annually by the President.} The proposed change for voting, most likely at the November meeting, will be changing the word four at-large members to additional at-large members. So not quantifying the additional members who will join in the Executive Committee with the Past President, President and Vice President.
 2. Article IV Section 5 – {No individual shall serve as the Chair of any single committee for more than three consecutive years.} Proposed change would be: No individual shall serve as the Chair of any single committee for more than two consecutive terms (4 years).
 3. Another area that we went through that does not have to go through the voting process is the various policy documents. The Member Expectation Policy, the ARBOT Expectation Policy and AAB member VP voting policy and the various committees also have their policies. The Exec committee wants to make sure that the Constitution and Bylaws are correct and that the various policies are in alignment.
 - b. Alumni Fee Waiver – Ashley Pinkham
 - i. An email was sent out to this group about the alumni fee waiver message that was sent to all alumni from Alumni Relations. It is really important for alumni to understand the pivotal role they play in the next generation of students. If everyone here could please post on social media or by word of mouth that as a STEM institution, Rose-Hulman is an excellent school. Students can apply on the Common App for all the different schools. Making a personal connection with students is very important and is going

to be even more important going forward with all the difficulties smaller private institutions are facing.

- ii. Important deadlines for the fee waiver code: Early Action Deadline of November 1 (codes will expire). Regular decisions are February 1, and May 1 is deposit deadline.
 - iii. Tom Bear really wants to emphasize how alumni can engage and share their experiences with students and encouraging them to apply by offering the fee waiver code is one way to get the conversation started.
 - iv. Charlie added that when the fee waiver program started, alumni were limited to 2 codes but that is no longer in place.
- c. Alumni Engagement – Jeffery Smiley
- i. Brief overview of committee presented to new members. During the last several years the committee has been putting together the guardrails and directives for our committee and how this committee will interact with Alumni Relations. The committee is currently at a point where we have created a short onboarding Powerpoint to guide new and existing alumni who would like to be engaged with us.
 - ii. There is the Board, the Alumni Engagement Committee and then there will be network coordinators. Network coordinators are tied to a region and within that region their goal will be to host events to help us reach alumni in that region. To help us do that, they are an affiliate of the school.
 - iii. On page 23 of the board book is a draft email that will be sent to those who expressed an interest in engaging with alumni in their region. The idea is to help folks get their feet wet in reaching out to alumni in their area and then through that process get them excited to become one of our network coordinators. They will then serve as a pathway for us to continue our alumni engagement for social events. Those events could be in collaboration with career services, student activities, etc., the list goes onward.
 - iv. This draft email is sitting with Alumni Relations and will hopefully be sent out to those that are interested as early as next week. Our goal is to have them host an event between now and October, which is perfectly aligned with Homecoming. At that point, we want to assess how those events went and how we can better assist our network coordinators and then formally roll this program out. We're creating a baseline of activity for us to build upon as a committee and board.
- d. Committee Review and Committee Members – Committee Chairs
- i. Board Membership – Dieter Schultz
 - 1. This committee is responsible for making sure there is a board and mimicking the alumni profile by decades. Distribution across our alumni network as a whole. We are trying to mirror that within the general body and our goal is to recruit and retain members on the board through the number of terms they want to serve. To be frank, our goal is to have members serve more than one term. We know that things come up in life, but our goal is not to have a huge turnover every one-two years. This committee is really trying to

recruit the future of the board and continue to replenish that talent that we have in this room.

2. Membership is a very defined time of year. There might be 2-3 months of activity and then you are done for the rest of the year. You can be a part of another committee if interested. Time frame for this committee is February to April. Nominations are open in December, the committee receives those candidates in February and goes through them, interviews selected individuals and then presents them to the board at the April meeting.

XI. Committee Breakout Sessions

XII. Committee Report Out

i. Awards – Mike Chaney

1. Thank you to all of those who have helped with Alumni Awards in the past. In speaking with Charlie, we are going to try and get the submissions out ahead of Homecoming, which might be an opportunity for us to encourage people to put in or to nominate someone. Think about people who deserve this award. The committee wants to keep very high standards on these awards and winners should be individuals that the Institute can truly honor. The biggest challenge is making sure that we get enough applications. More than one award can be given out in each category. The following are the awards offered:
 - a. Volunteer Award – honors an alumnae/us who has donated significant time in their volunteer efforts for Rose-Hulman, toward the advancement of STEM education, in professional / industrial groups and organizations, and within their community (church, education, civics, underprivileged groups, etc). Graduates of all class years are eligible. Alumni, faculty, and staff are allowed and encouraged to submit nominations.
 - b. Career Achievement - honors alumni whose achievements in their professional field(s) have brought distinction to themselves, credit to the institute and benefit to their communities (public or professional). All alumni are eligible. Alumni, faculty and staff are allowed and encouraged to submit nominations.
 - c. Collegian Rose Award - honors **alumni employees** who, through their work, have elevated the institute's mission, strengthened the bridge between the alumni and campus communities and have proven themselves to be an advocate for lifelong relationships with the institute. All Rose-Hulman employees who are alumni are eligible. Alumni, faculty and staff are allowed and encouraged to submit nominations. (The Committee does not pick the award winner; this award is selected by previous winners within the Institution.)

- d. Distinguished Young Alumni - honors graduates of the last decade who have achieved significant success in **their first ten years after graduation** in the areas of professional achievement, community service, and commitment to their alma mater. All graduates of the last decade are eligible. Alumni, faculty and staff are allowed and encouraged to submit nominations.
 - e. Honor Alumni - recognizes exceptional alumni achievement in any field, vocational and/or voluntary. Graduates of all class years are eligible. Recipients of this award are alumni who have attained and maintained extremely high stations in their chosen fields of endeavor and in their service to society. **Due to its remarkable value as the institute's highest alumni award, it is given sparingly.** Alumni, faculty and staff are allowed and encouraged to submit nominations.
 - f. Honorary Alumni - honors one staff and one faculty member each year who display prodigious commitment to the institute, a selfless spirit, and dedication to the betterment of their respective department as well as to their own professional undertakings. All Rose-Hulman faculty and staff are eligible. Alumni, faculty and staff are allowed and encouraged to submit nominations. (These individuals are not alumni but because of their contribution to Rose-Hulman, they are made Honorary Alumni. (This award is not selected by this committee; the Institution selects these winners.)
 - g. Rachel M. Romas Award - Award was established in 2017 to recognize an outstanding student who displays high character, great achievement in academics and institute initiatives, and promise for continuing these exemplary qualities in their future life as an alumnus(a). The award is named for Rachel M. Romas who served as Alumni Relations Coordinator from 2015-2017. All students are eligible. All alumni, faculty, and staff may submit a nomination. (This award is not selected by the committee; the institution selects this winner.)
2. Read through these descriptions and think about people that you know in your career that would be eligible for these awards. We encourage everyone to nominate faculty and staff that you worked with while you attended Rose or if you know a student that is here that is deserving of the Rachel M. Romas Award, please nominate.
 3. Most of the people who win these awards are surprised. They don't think of getting an award and usually will not nominate themselves. These are alumni that are of good character and are

just doing their jobs. They view themselves as making a difference quietly in the community, their society and their career.

4. Active AAB members are ineligible to receive an award.
- ii. Career Services – Melva Holt & Austin Salisbury
1. Austin referred to the committee report referenced on pages 24-25 in board book. Jared Goulding spoke earlier about what is referenced in our report. Dates are listed for the upcoming Career Fairs and Rose-Expo. Please encourage your companies to come and register to attend Career Services events.
 2. Our committee is going to continue the career panel with some minor modifications. Our trial career panels with Career Services were on Mechanical Engineering and Chemical Engineering. The Committee wants to work on a combined panel and has a date, penciled in of September 18. Another panel will be held in January before the winter career fair. Our committee will be looking for panelists for those two different careers, targeting people with 2-15 years of experience with a mix of leadership, technical and further education. If this board has anyone in mind or would like to participate, please contact Melva, Austin or Nick.
 3. Secondly, the committee is working on the career readiness panel. This was an idea last year, but it didn't quite make it in time for April. Melva will work with Career Services on this panel. This is to help students have a day one positive impact and first impression. Last year there was discussion on students at other universities having really bad first impressions with their companies. We want to set our students up for success and this panel will target that objective.
 4. This committee is going to work with Career Services and brainstorm on how the AAB can best support them. The committee has an idea and would like to develop this over the course of the next year. Rose-Hulman has alumni all across the country in different companies that serve as Executive Directors or CEOs, and their companies are not recruiting from Rose-Hulman. How do we bridge that gap and reach out to the executives in the proper manner to convince them to recruit from Rose-Hulman and hire Rose-Hulman students?
 5. Melva referenced the criteria for the proposed new Career Services Alumni Award on page 24 of the board book. Melva made a motion to discuss the criteria; Austin seconded. A period of questions, comments and discussion was held in regard to criteria and other awards that are already offered. Alexa made a motion to vote on the Career Services Award Criteria as written. This was an electronic voting procedure, QR code provided, all AAB members voted; the motion did not pass as written. It was suggested to have a virtual discussion around changing and updating the language on the Volunteer Award to an Impact Award.

- XIII. Upcoming Meeting Dates – Amanda Stapleton
 - a. Fall 2025: Saturday, November 8th (Terre Haute)
 - b. **Spring 2026: Saturday, April 25th (Terre Haute – Alumni Awards)-date change.**
 - c. Summer 2026, Saturday, August 8, Chicago, Illinois
 - d. Fall 2026, Saturday, November 7, Terre Haute
 - e. Spring 2027, Saturday, April 24th, Terre Haute (Alumni Awards)
 - f. Summer 2027, Saturday, August 7th, Terre Haute
- XIV. Adjournment – Amanda Stapleton
- XV. Alumni Event – Hulman House